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(19) Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets

(11) Publication number: **0 110 693**
B1

(12) # EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION

(45) Date of publication of patent specification: **05.10.88**

(51) Int. Cl.⁴: **A 24 B 15/10**, A 24 B 13/00, A 24 B 15/12, A 24 B 3/08, A 24 D 1/00

(21) Application number: **83307221.8**

(22) Date of filing: **25.11.83**

(54) **Tobacco filler blends and smoking articles containing them.**

(30) Priority: **26.11.82 US 444928**

(43) Date of publication of application:
13.06.84 Bulletin 84/24

(45) Publication of the grant of the patent:
05.10.88 Bulletin 88/40

(84) Designated Contracting States:
CH DE GB LI NL

(56) References cited:
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US-A-4 131 117

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EP 0 110 693 B1

Courier Press, Leamington Spa, England.

Description

The present invention relates to cured tobacco. More particularly, the present invention relates to a novel tobacco filler and to tobacco blends and smoking articles containing this tobacco.

Tobacco is cultivated widely throughout the world, but the leaf produced in each locality differs from leaves produced in the other localities. Moreover, each green leaf on any given plant differs from all of the other leaves in age, size, colour, proportion of length to width, thickness, and amounts and distribution of chemical constituents.

Certain cultural practices are employed to cause physical and chemical changes in the leaf. These practices include topping, suckering, priming, and the application of mineral and organic fertilizer as well as of suckering inhibitors. "Topping" is the term applied to the removal of the inflorescence. "Suckering" applies to the removal of axillary buds that grow after the plants have been topped. "Priming" means removal of leaves at successive intervals, as they mature. The number of primings, usually 5 to 8 depends upon the type of tobacco and the kind of weather that prevails throughout the harvesting. Essentially all bright tobaccos are harvested by the priming method. Nearly all burley tobaccos are stalkcut, i.e. cut off at ground level, in the United States but may be either primed or stalk cut in other tobacco-growing countries.

Once the mature green leaf is harvested, it is subjected to such conditions of humidity and temperature as will permit it to cure. There are essentially four kinds of curing processes, namely, flue-curing, air-curing, fire-curing and sun-curing, each of which is an aerobic process.

In the flue-curing process primed leaves in hands or groups of from two to four leaves are hung in small, tightly constructed barns. In the initial "yellowing" stage the barns are closed to maintain a high relative humidity at temperatures within the range of about 30° to 35°C for about 24 to 36 hours. In the second or "fixing" stage, the temperatures are gradually raised to the range of about 50° to 60°C and maintained for about 12 to 24 hours to fix the colors, during which time the blade tissues become completely desiccated. Once the colors have been fixed, the temperatures are gradually raised to about 70° to 75°C and are maintained within that range for about 24 to 72 hours, during which time the midribs (i.e., stems) become dry and brittle, whereupon the fire is extinguished and the barn opened to permit the leaves to reabsorb moisture and become pliable so that they can be handled without breakage.

Air-curing is performed in widely ventilated barns under natural atmospheric conditions with little or no artificial heat. This procedure is characterized by slow gradual drying of the leaf, which is typically harvested by stalk-cutting. If humid weather prevails during curing, it may be necessary to employ a charcoal fire to raise the temperature within the barn and at the same time provide a relative humidity within the range of from 65 to 75%. Normally, air-cured leaves reach the "yellow stage" about 10 to 12 days after harvesting, and 6 or 7 days later the "brown stage" is reached. It requires 30 to 40 days to reach the "complete" stage. At the end of the process, the water content has been reduced by 80 to 85% of the green leaf weight. There is a translocation of substances from the leaves to the stalks.

A distinctive difference between air-curing and flue-curing is that in the air-curing process the soluble sugars content of burley is reduced substantially to zero owing to oxidations that would be mostly inhibited during a flue-curing process but which occur during the air-curing process.

The bulk of the tobacco is subjected to a redrying and then an aging process before it is incorporated into smoking articles. During redrying, the leaves are reheated until the mositure content has been reduced to about 6% and then the leaves are permitted to reabsorb moisture under controlled conditions until their moisture content is about 9 or 10%. The leaves are then packed into containers, typically hogsheads having a capacity of about 450 kg, and then are stored 1 to 3 years to undergo aging, which involves mild fermentation, with a loss of dry matter of about 1 to 2% for flue-cured and 3 to 4% for air-cured leaves. During aging of Virginia-type tobaccos, a slow decline in percentage composition of organic substances occurs. The most significant changes involve the sugars and amino nitrogen.

Tobacco filler, as used in the manufacture of smoking articles, for example cigarettes, includes shredded, cured tobacco exclusive of the large stems. The tobacco may be "cased" with a mixture of hygroscopic agents and flavouring agents, or uncased, and may have been treated according to a known expansion process or stiffening to increase its filling power, i.e. its ability to form a firm cigarette rod at a given moisture content.

Flue-cured tobacco, commonly prepared from bright or Virginia tobacco, is yellowish to reddish-organe in color, thin to medium in body, and mild in flavour. It is high in sugar content and low to average in nitrogenous materials, acids, and nicotine.

Burley tobacco is air-cured and normally grown in rich soils. It is light brown to reddish brown in color and has a low carbohydrate content and a high content of nitrogenous materials, nicotine and nonvolatile acids.

Maryland tobacco is a light air-cured tobacco similar to burley but somewhat milder and lighter in taste. It is low in carbohydrates and nicotine and average in nitrogenous materials and nonvolatile acids.

Oriental tobacco, grown in Turkey, Greece, and neighbouring areas, is sun-cured and has a strong flavour; is low in nicotine, average in carbohydrates and nitrogenous materials, and high in sugars, nonvolatile acids, and volatile flavour oils.

American cigarette blends typically contain 40 to 75% flue-cured, 14 to 45% air-cured burley, 1 to 5% Maryland, 5 to 15% sun-cured oriental, and 5 to 20% reconstituted tobacco.

As used herein, the following terms have the indicated meanings.

Cylinder Volume (CV)

Thu volume that a given weight of shredded tobacco occupies under a predetermined pressure, expressed as cc/10g. To determine this value, tobacco filler weighing 10.000g is placed in a 3.358 cm diameter cylinder and the cylinder is vibrated for 30 seconds on a "Syntron" vibrator and the tobacco is then compressed by an 1875 g piston, 3.33 cm in diameter, for 5 minutes. The resulting volume of tobacco is reported as cylinder volume. This test is carried out at standard environmental conditions of 23.9°C and 60% relative humidity (RH). A high cylinder volume indicates a high filling power, i.e. a lower weight of tobacco is required to produce a cigarette rod of a given circumference and length than is required with a tobacco of lower filling power.

Equilibrium cylinder volume ($CV_{eq.}$)

The cylinder volume determined after the tobacco filler has been equilibrated by conditioning at 23.9°C and 60% RH, typically for 18 hours, although conditioning for 4 to 5 hours is also acceptable.

Oven-volatiles content (OV)

A value indicating the moisture content (or percentage of moisture) of tobacco. It is determined by weighing a sample of tobacco filler before and after treatment for three hours in a circulating air oven at 100°C. The weight loss as a percentage of initial weight is the oven-volatiles content. The weight loss is attributable to volatiles in addition to water but OV may be considered equivalent to moisture content since, under the test conditions, not more than about 1% of the tobacco filler weight is volatiles other than water.

Equilibrium oven-volatiles content ($OV_{eq.}$)

The OV value as determined after the tobacco filler has been equilibrated by conditioning at 23.9°C and 60% RH for 18 hours.

Specific volume (SV)

The volume of a predetermined amount of tobacco divided by the weight of the tobacco, expressed as cc/g. Specific volume differs from cylinder volume in that the tobacco is not compressed and in that the SV measurement excludes the inter-particle space or volume which constributes to the CV measurement. As specific volume increases, filling power also increases. The "$SV_{acetone}$" value may be determined by a simple application of the weight in air versus weight in liquid method according to which a one-gram sample of tobacco is placed in a porous container which is then weighed, submerged in acetone, and reweighed. The "SV_{Hg}" value is determined by placing a known weight of a tobacco sample in a sealed chamber of known volume and weight and then evacuating the air in the chamber to a pressure of 1 torr. An amount of mercury is then admitted to the sample chamber in a manner such that the interfacial pressure between the merucry and the tobacco limits the intrusion of mercury into the porous structure. The volume of mercury displaced by the tobacco sample of known weight at an interfacial pressure of 52 to 104 torr absolute is expressed as SV_{Hg} in cc/g.

Equilibrium specific volume ($SV_{eq.}$)

The SV value determined after the tobacco filler has been equilibrated by conditioning at 23.9°C and 60% RH for about 18 hours.

Gopalachari et al in Indian J. agri, Sci. *41* (7), 615—619 (July 1971) describe work on the chemical differentiation of Virginia tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum L.*) subjected to different types of curing. In the course of this work the leaf lamina and midrib of the "Delcrest" variety of Viriginia tobacco were subjected to five different treatments including flue-curing, sun-curing and air-curing. The products were then analysed *inter alia* for nitrogen, nicotine, reducing and other sugars. However, the tobacco employed was grown to India under a regime substantially different from that of traditionally grown bright tobacco, and the harvesting and curing process designated by the authors as "air curing" did not conform to traditional air curing as understood in the art.

It has now unexpectedly been found that if traditionally grown bright tobacco is air cured instead of flue cured, a product is obtained that has a characteristic analysis and provides a tobacco filler which has the subjective qualities of burley tobacco when incorporated in a smoking article and smoked, and which has, as compared to burley tobacco, a reduced NO content in the smoke and an increased filling power.

The tobacco filler according to the invention is characterised in that the bright tobacco is air cured instead of flue cured, and that the resulting air cured bright tobacco filler has, on a dry weight basis, a total reducing sugar content in the range 0 to 6%, a chlorogenic acid content in the range 0 to 0.4%, a rutin content in the range 0 to 0.2%, a hot water solubles content in the range 45 to 55%, a total ash content in the range 12 to 26%, a combined proline and threonine content in the range 0 to 1 mg/g, a combined aspartic acid and aspargine content in the range 0.5 to 1.7 mg/g, and a combined glutamic acid and glutamine content in the range 0.5 to 1.6 mg/g.

Although modifications may be required depending on the specific edaphic (soil) and meteorological

(climatic) conditions of the area in which the tobacco- is grown, the tobacco filler of the present invention is preferably prepared from bright tobacco grown with a fertilization rate of about N:P:K=72:128:192 kg/hm^2 (64:114:171 lb/acre). The mature green leaf is harvested and is then air-cured. Stalk-cutting is the preferred method of harvesting where the tobacco is to be grown in the United States, but in other tobacco-growing countries priming, or a combination of initial, partial priming followed by stalk-cutting, may be preferred. The air-cured bright tobacco may be used immediately in smoking products or it may first be subjected to aging.

The air-cured bright tobacco of the present invention may be used to form 100% bright tobacco smoking articles, such as cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos or the like, according to conventional manufacturing techniques, or may be blended with other tobacco fillers such as oriental, burley, Maryland, flue-cured bright, reconstituted tobacco and processed (i.e., shredded or expanded) tobacco stems.

The preferred blended tobacco embodying the present invention comprises from 5% to 100% of the air-cured bright tobacco of this invention, from 0 to 50% burley tobacco filler, from 0 to 30% oriental tobacco filler, from 0 to 60% reconstituted tobacco, from 0 to 10% processed tobacco stems and from 0 to 95% flue-cured bright tobacco filler, with all percentages being by weight of the total blend. The NO content of the smoke may be progressively reduced by substituting increasing amounts of the air-cured bright tobacco filler of the present invention for the burley tobacco in the blend, and may be further reduced by also substituting the tobacco of the present invention for the reconstituted tobacco in the blend. Even greater reductions can be obtained by employing denitrated reconstituted tobacco. Denitration may be accomplished by any known method, for example, microbially, or by the method of U.S. Patent 4,131,117.

Another preferred blended tobacco of the present invention comprises from 5% to 100% of the bright tobacco filler of the present invention, from 0 to 30% oriental tobacco filler, from 0 to 60% reconstituted tobacco, from 0 to 10% processed tobacco stems, and from 0 to 95% flue-cured bright tobacco filler, with all percentages being by weight of the total blend. The burley and reconstituted tobacco may be substituted as in the preceding blend. In a particularly preferred embodiment, this blended tobacco will contain about 20% reconstituted tobacco and about 25% of the air-cured tobacco filler of the present invention by weight of the total blend.

A preferred blend which has a low NO content in the smoke, comprises 60 to 100% of the air-cured bright tobacco filler of the present invention, from 0 to 30% oriental tobacco filler and from 0 to 10% processed tobacco stems, by weight of the total blend. More preferably, this blend comprises about 50%, by weight of the total blend, of the filler of the present invention.

A particularly preferred blended tobacco having a substantially reduced NO content in the smoke comprises from about 40 to about 95% by weight of the total blend, of the tobacco filler of the present invention and from about 5 to about 60%, by weight of the total blend, of denitrated reconstituted tobacco.

The present invention includes within its scope smoking articles, such as cigarettes, which are fabricated employing either 100% of the air-cured bright tobacco of the present invention or one of the aforementioned tobacco blends. The tobacco may be cased or not, as desired, using commerically available flavorants and the like.

The preferred embodiments are further characterized by the following examples. Comparative examples are also presented.

The bright tobacco (Coker 319) employed in examples 1 through 6 was grown in Virgania according to bright tobacco regime with a fertilization rate of N:P:K=64:114:171 lb./acre. Bright tobacco leaves from the bottom one-third of the stalk were primed and flue-cured while other plants were stalk-cut at the same time and air-cured. When the middle one-third of the leaves reached normal ripeness, they were primed and flue-cured while other plants were stalk-cut and air-cured. This allowed the middle one-third of the leaves to grow to the same dimension as the leaves used in flue-curing. Leaves from the top one-third of the stalk were processed in the same manner. All curings were conducted according to conventional methods for flue-curing and air-curing. Lead samples were hand stemmed and processed in a pilot plant facility.

Example 1: The air-cured, stalk-cut, bright tobacco from the bottom middle, and top of the plant and the flue-cured bright tobacco from the bottom, middle, and top of the plant were subjected to chemical analysis. The results of this anslysis are summarized below in Table 1 and in Table 2.

TABLE 1
Chemical composition of bright tobacco (coker 319) (dry weight basis)

		Bottom		Middle		Top	
		Flue[1]	Air	Flue[1]	Air	Flue[1]	Air
Total-N	(%)	2.14	1.80	2.20	2.28	2.33	3.18
Insoluble-N	(%)	0.90	0.46	0.96	1.03	0.97	1.37
α-Amino-N	(%)	0.54	0.48	0.30	0.20	0.19	0.24
Soluble-NH_3-N	(%)	<0.1	<0.1	T[2]	0.1	0.2	0.1
Nitrate-N	(%)	0.05	0.09	T[2]	T[2]	<0.04	<0.04
Total Reducing Sugar	(%)	8.1	T[2]	18.9	6.0	21.5	<2.0
Glucose	(%)	4.1	N.D.[3]	8.9	2.1	10.2	0.7
Fructose	(%)	4.1	N.D.[3]	8.0	1.6	9.6	0.8
Sucrose	(%)	3.7	0.2	4.3	N.D.[3]	4.3	0.2
Total Alkaloids	(%)	1.64	1.36	2.98	2.79	3.80	3.94
Petroleum Ether Extractables	(%)	6.5	7.2	6.3	8.2	6.7	9.4
Chlorogenic acid	(%)	1.00	<0.4	1.55	N.D.[3]	1.45	N.D.[3]
Rutin	(%)	0.59	<0.16	0.57	0.16	0.90	<0.16
Hot Water Solubles	(%)	63	50	67	53	66	50
Total Ash	(%)	19.4	25.7	11.2	14.0	7.5	12.2
Ca	(%)	3.5	3.8	1.9	2.4	1.4	2.0
Malic acid	(%)	3.1	12.0	6.4	5.9	2.6	3.5
Citric acid	(%)	0.7	3.5	0.5	1.4	0.7	1.0
Oxalic acid	(%)	1.1	2.4	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.8
Acetic acid	(µg/g)	602	277	802	494	697	199
Propionic acid	(µg/g)	8	14	11	T[2]	11	8
Butyric acid	(µg/g)	8	9	9	8	5	6

[1] Comparative
[2] T=trace
[3] N.D.=not detected

The nitrate content, which is very low, is attributable, in part, to the traditional cultivation practice for bright tobacco, which employs a low rate of nitrogen fertilization. The total reducing sugars are lower in the air-cured as compared with the flue-cured leaves for the same stalk position while the petroleum ether extractables are higher in the air-cured than in the flue-cured. Due to the more pronounced loss of starch, sugar and some relatively succeptible compounds during air-curing, as compared with flue-curing, the relative weight percentage of petroleum ether extractables is higher for the air-cured leaves. The lower hot water solubles fraction in the air-cured tobacco is attributable to the pronounced changes in soluble carbohydrates, amino acids, polyphenols and other susceptible compounds.

TABLE 2
Amino acid composition of bright tobacco (coker 319)[1]

	Bottom		Middle		Top	
	Flue[2]	Air	Flue[2]	Air	Flue[2]	Air
Alanine	0.62	0.30	0.52	0.40	0.88	0.50
Valine	0.21	—	0.09	0.12	<0.1	<0.1
Glycine	<0.1	—	0.03	0.07	<0.1	<0.1
Isoleucine	<0.1	0.13	0.05	0.07	0.19	0.12
Leucine	<0.1	—	0.05	0.13	<0.1	0.10
Proline & Threonine	2.64	<0.1	10.3	0.97	3.50	0.68
Serine	0.32	—	0.15	0.08	<0.1	<0.1
Phenylalanine	1.24	—	0.44	0.05	0.14	0.12
Aspartic & Asparagine	3.06	0.54	1.08	0.56	0.53	1.68
Glutamic & Glutamine	4.46	0.51	1.71	0.60	0.50	1.56
Lysine	—	—	0.05	0.04	—	—

[1] Values given are mg/g, dry weight basis
[2] Comparative

The amino acid contents summarized in Table 2 were determined by a gas chromatographic procedure. Due to the nature of the sample preparation and determination, tryptophane was not determined and proline and threonine were combined. Aspartic acid-asparagine is reported as aspartic, and glutamic acid-glutamine is reported as glutamic. The air-cured leaves evidence a greater reduction in amino acids, especially in proline, aspartic and glutamic (with the exception of the top stalk leaves) than the flue-cured leaves.

Example 2: Tobacco strips were cut from the same location in flue-cured and air-cured bright tobacco leaves from the same stalk position. Ten leaves from each sample were used to obtain 774 square centimeters of strips for weight measurement. CV_{eq}, OV_{eq} and SV_{eq} were determined. Portions of each sample were treated according to the carbon dioxide process disclosed in U.S. patent 4,340,073 (302°C., 40 m./sec. air, 100% steam) to expand the tobacco. The CV_{eq} and OV_{eq} values for the expanded samples were determined. All of these values are summarized below in Table 3.

TABLE 3
Physical characteristics of bright tobacco (coker 319)

	Bottom		Middle		Top	
	Flue[1]	Air	Flue[1]	Air	Flue[1]	Air
Wt. (g/774 cm^2) (DWB[2])	4.59	3.24	6.67	4.09	8.72	6.14
ΔWt. (%)	−29.4		−38.7		−29.6	
$CV_{eq.}$ (cc/10 g)	32.5	53.7	21.3	52.1	21.2	52.5
ΔCV (%)	+65.2		+144.6		+147.6	
$OV_{eq.}$ (%)	12.80	11.89	14.16	12.17	14.02	11.99
SV_{Hg} (cc/g)	1.22	1.42	1.46	1.95	1.36	1.91
$CV_{eq.}$[3] (cc/10 g)	100.5	121.8	52.7	119.8	47.2	131.8
$OV_{eq.}$[3] (%)	11.75	11.04	12.50	10.47	12.21	10.05

[1] Comparative
[2] Dry weight basis
[3] Value determined after expansion

The results show that air-curing causes a weight loss of approximately 30 to 40% as compared with flue-cured leaves from the same stalk position. Equilibrium cylinder volumes of the cut filler samples show that air-cured tobaccos have a higher cylinder volume that the flue-cured tobacco. This higher filling power compensates for the greater weight less experienced with air-curing. The results also show that the expanded air-cured samples have a higher equilibrium cylinder volume than do the expanded flue-cured samples.

Example 3: Sample cigarettes were made containing 100% bright tobacco. One sample was made using flue-cured leaves from three different positions in the weight ratio of bottom: middle:top=1:2:2, and other sample cigarettes were made from air-cured leaves from the three different stalk positions and mixed in the same weight ratio. The cigarettes were fabricated as filter cigarettes having a circumference of 24.5 mm, an 85 mm tobacco rod containing 800 mg of tobacco, and a 21 mm cellulose acetate filter, without dilution. The cigarettes were submitted for smoke chemistry analysis and the results are summarized below in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Smoke chemistry of 100% bright tobacco cigarettes[1]

	Flue-cured[2] bright (100%)	Air-cured bright (100%)
Total RID[3] (inches H_2O)	2.9	3.2
Total tobacco wt. (g/cigt.)	0.939	0.671
TPM[4] (mg/cigt.)	42.1	39.4
Nicotine in smoke (mg/cigt.)	3.64	2.74
H_2O in smoke (mg/cigt.)	6.20	5.74
Tar (mg/cigt.)	32.3	30.9
Puff Count (puffs/cigt.)	14.0	9.6
Static burning time (min./40 mm)	14.8	11.0
Tobacco burned dynamically (g/cigt.)	0.326	0.274
Gas Phase		
NO (mg/cigt.)	0.09	0.10
CO (mg/cigt.)	23.2	23.2
HCN (mg/cigt.)	0.20	0.20
RCHO (mg/cigt.)	0.91	0.86
Total-N (%)	2.24	2.54
Reducing Sugars (%)	17.8	2.0

[1] No dilution
[2] Comparative
[3] Resistance to draw
[4] Total particulate matter

The difference in tobacco weight is accounted for by the substantially greater filling power of the air-cured tobacco. On a cigarette basis, the tar and gas phase component values are substantially the same for the two cigarettes.

Example 4: Control cigarettes and five different sample cigarettes were fabricated as described in Example 3 and designed to deliver about 16 mg of tar. The control cigarettes were made from a conventional blend of tobaccos comprising, by weight of the total blend, about 30% to about 33% flue-cured bright tobacco, about 30% to about 40% burley tobacco, about 10% to about 16% oriental tobacco, and about 15% to about 25% reconstituted tobacco. This conventional blend of tobacco also contained processed stems, such as those prepared by the process of U.S. Patent 3,734,104, and the percentage given for the reconstituted tobacco component of the conventional blend represents the sum of the percentages for the reconstituted tobacco component and the processed stems component. The control cigarettes were treated with after-cut flavors and were cased with traditional burley casing.

The sample cigarettes were made by substituting the air-cured bright tobacco of the present invention for one or more of the components of the control blend, as indicated in the footnotes to Table 5 and Table 6 below. The control and the five samples were subjected to smoke chemistry analysis and the results of this analysis are summarized below in Tables 5 and 6.

TABLE 5
Smoke chemistry of blended cigarettes

	Control[1]	Sample 1[2]	Sample 2[3]
Total RTD[4] (inches H_2O)	4.7	5.1	5.2
Total Tobacco Wt. (g/cigt.)	0.744	0.825	0.795
Blend Nitrate-N (%)	0.19	0.11	0.11
TPM[5] (mg/cigt.)	20.3	21.8	21.9
Nicotine in Smoke (mg/cigt.)	1.07	1.20	1.36
Water in Smoke (mg/cigt.)	3.24	3.64	3.50
FTC[6] Tar (mg/cigt.)	16.0	17.0	17.0
Puff Count (puffs/cigt.)	8.9	10.0	10.1
Gas Phase			
CO (mg/cigt.)	15.4	15.4	16.3
NO (mg/cigt.)	0.28	0.18	0.16
HCN (mg/cigt.)	0.15	0.15	0.15
RCHO (mg/cigt.)	0.78	0.81	0.87

[1] Control
[2] Sample 1=air-cured bright tobacco (30% of the total blend) cased with burley casing was substituted for the burly portion of the control.
[3] Sample 2=uncased, air-cured bright (with after-cut flavor only) was substituted for the burley portion of the control.
[4] Resistance to draw
[5] Total particulate matter
[6] Measured according to the method disclosed in *Journal of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists*, Pillsbury et al., Vol. 52, p. 458 (1969).

Samples of both cigarettes were submitted to a panel of expert smokers and the panelists were not able to distinguish them from the control cigarette based on the same blend without the changes noted above.

TABLE 6
Smoke chemistry of blended cigarettes

	Control[1]	Sample 3[2]	Sample 4[3]	Sample 5[4]
Total RTD[5] (inches H_2O)	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.9
Total tobacco wt. (g/cigt.)	0.832	0.875	0.763	0.683
Blend Nitrate-N (%)	0.19			0.05
Nicotine in Smoke (mg/cigt.)	1.15	1.35	1.23	1.55
FTC[6] Tar (mg/cigt.)	15.8	18.0	15.3	17.7
Puff count (puffs/cigt.)	9.4	11.0	8.6	8.2
Gas Phase				
CO (mg/cigt.)	14.0	15.2	15.2	16.4
NO (mg/cigt.)	0.26	0.18	0.10	0.07
HCN (mg/cigt.)	0.15	0.18	0.14	0.16
RCHO (mg/cigt.)	0.81	0.81	0.78	0.78

[1] Control
[2] Sample 3=a commercial blend of ordinary flue-cured bright tobaccos substituted for the burley portion of the control. Comparative.
[3] Sample 4=air-cured bright tobacco (25% of the total blend) substituted for the burley tobacco portion of the control, and denitrified, reconstituted tobacco substituted for the reconstituted tobacco portion of the control.
[4] Sample 5=air-cured bright tobacco (50% of the total blend) substituted for the burley portion of the control and also for the reconstituted tobacco portion of the control.
[5] Resistance to draw.
[6] Measured according to the method disclosed in *Journal of the Association of Official Analytical Chemists*. Pillsbury et al., Vol. 52, p. 458 (1969).

The results show that when the air-cured bright tobacco of the present invention is substituted for the burley tobacco in the blend, the NO in the smoke is significantly reduced. As shown by sample 4, the reduction in NO may be increased by substituting air-cured bright tobacco for the burley tobacco and using denitrified reconstituted tobacco for the reconstituted tobacco. As shown by sample 5, the greatest reduction in NO was observed when the air-cured bright was substituted for both the burley tobacco and the reconstituted tobacco.

Cigarettes of the sample 4 type were submitted to the smoking panel and found to be similar to a control cigarette containing the same blend of components with the exception of the air-cured bright and the microbially denitrated reconstituted tobacco. Cigarettes of the sample 5 type were also submitted to the smoking panel, and although no burley tobacco was present in the blend, on smoking, the group of experienced smokers noted a distinct burley character based on taste and throat impact.

Example 5: Cigarettes fabricated as described in Example 3 and containing 100% air-cured bright tobacco were submitted to an experienced flavor panel for evaluation. Subjectively, the air-cured bright tobacco cigarettes were determined to have the characteristics of a blended tobacco cigarette. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 representing the subjective characteristics of flue-cured bright tobacco and 10 representing the characteristics of burley tobacco, the air-cured bright tobacco was rated 4.

Example 6: Cigarettes were fabricated as described in Example 3 and submitted to an experienced flavor panel for evaluation. Control cigarettes were fabricated from a control blend of tobaccos, which blend was as defined for the conventional blend in Example 4.

Since burley casing tends to make burley tobacco smoother than uncased burley tobacco, and since, as determined in Example 5, air-cured tobacco rates in character between burley and flue-cured bright tobaccos, two samples of cigarettes were prepared. One had air-cured bright with burley casing substituted for the burley portion of the control blend. The other was prepared by substituting uncased air-cured bright for the burley portion of the control blend. Both samples were evaluated by the panelists as being very similar to the control blend cigarettes, with the second sample having more impact.

For comparative purposes, a third sample cigarette was prepared by substituting a blend of flue-cured bright tobaccos for the burley tobacco portion of the control blend to determine whether bright tobacco,

regardless of the curing process, can be used to replace burley in a blended cigarette. The third sample cigarettes were evaluated as being different from the control and not having the blended cigarette characteristics.

Fourth and fifth samples of cigarettes were prepared to test the acceptibility of using air-cured Bright for low nitrate blend cigarettes. In the fourth sample cigarette, air-cured bright was substituted for the flue-cured bright portion of the control, and denitrated reconstituted tobacco was substituted for the reconstituted tobacco portion of the control. This cigarette had acceptable subjective characteristics. In the fifth sample cigarette, both the burley and the reconstituted tobacco portions of the control were substituted by the air-cured bright tobacco. It was determined that the subjective characteristics were very similar to the subjective characteristics of the control cigarettes.

In the following Examples 7 and 8, 85 mm cigarettes were fabricated having conventional cellulose acetate filters (21 mm, in length). Cigarettes were submitted to an experienced flavor test panel and were also analyzed according to methods well known in the art for the determination of gas phase constituents. The cigarettes subjected to chemical analysis were smoked on a smoking machine calibrated to take 2-second, 35 cc puffs once per minute.

Example 7: Cigarettes containing 100% air-cured bright tobacco were submitted to the flavor panel and the panelists agreed that, on smoking, the taste and aroma was similar to a blended cigarette containing both burley tobacco and flue-cured bright tobacco.

Example 8: A control cigarette was prepared from a control blend of tobaccos, which blend was as defined for the conventional blend in Example 4. A second cigarette was fabricated from a blend comprising 82.5% uncased, air-cured, top stalk bright tobacco grown in the Dominican Republic, and 17.5% reconstituted tobacco. The reconstituted tobacco, which was low in nitrates, was made according to a modification of the process disclosed in U.S. patent 4,131,118.

Samples of the second cigarette and the control cigarette were smoked automatically and the gas phase analyzed. The results were summarized below in Table 7.

TABLE 7

	Cigarette 1 (Control)	2
CO (mg/cigt.)	12.4	15.2
NO (mg/cigt.)	0.23	0.09
HCN (mg/cigt.)	0.14	0.17
RCHO (mg/cigt.)	0.70	0.66

Samples of each cigarette were also submitted to an expert smoking panel for evaluation. The second cigarette was somewhat neutral, with character more towards flue-cured bright to oriental rather than towards burley. Some mouth coating was noted as well as some flue-cured sweetness. It was also judged to have a blended character with moderate to low body, and some harshness, but lacked throat impact. The aftertaste was judged clean.

Claims

1. A tobacco filler for smoking articles which comprises traditionally grown bright tobacco, characterised in that the bright tobacco is air cured instead of flue cured, and that the resulting air cured bright tobacco filler has, on a dry weight basis, a total reducing sugar content in the range 0 to 6%, a chlorogenic acid content in the range 0 to 0.4%, a rutin content in the range 0 to 0.2%, a hot water soluble content in the range 45 to 55%, a total ash content in the range 12 to 26%, a combined proline and threonine content in the range 0 to 1 mg/g, a combined aspartic acid and aspargine content in the range 0.5 to 1.7 mg/g, and a combined glutamic acid and glutamine content in the range 0.5 to 1.6 mg/g.

2. A blended tobacco for smoking articles, characterised in that it comprises, by weight of the total blend, from 5 to 100%, of a tobacco filler according to claim 1, and 0 to 50% of burley tobacco filler, from 0 to 30% of oriental tobacco filler, from 0 to 60% of reconstituted tobacco, from 0 to 10% of processed tobacco stems, and from 0 to 95% of flue-cured bright tobacco filler.

3. A blended tobacco for smoking articles, characterised in that it comprises by weight of the total blend, from 5 to 100% of a tobacco filler according to claim 1, from 0 to 30% of oriental tobacco filler, from 0 to 60% of reconstituted tobacco, from 0 to 10% of processed tobacco stems, and from 0 to 95% of flue-cured bright tobacco filler.

4. A blended tobacco according to claim 2 or 3, characterised in that the reconstituted tobacco is denitrated, reconstituted tobacco.

5. A blended tobacco according to claim 4, characterised in that the reconstituted tobacco comprises

about 20%, by weight of the total blend, and the tobacco filler according to claim 1 comprises 20—30%, preferably about 25%, by weight of the total blend.

6. A blended tobacco according to claim 4 wherein the tobacco filler according to claim 1 comprises about 50%, by weight of the total blend.

7. A blended tobacco for smoking articles, characterised in that it comprises, by weight of the total blend, from 60 to 100% of the tobacco filler of claim 1, from to 30% of oriental tobacco filler, and from 0 to 10% of processes tobacco stems.

8. A blended tobacco for smoking articles characterised in that it comprises, by weight of the total blend, from 40 to 95% of a tobacco filler according to claim 1, and from 5 to 60% of denitrated, reconstituted tobacco.

9. A smoking article, comprising a substantially cylindrical charge of tobacco or tobacco filler according to any preceding claim, wrapped in a combustible wrapper.

Patentansprüche

1. Fülltabak für Raucherartikel, welcher traditionell gezogenen hallen Tabak enthält, dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass der helle Tabak anstelle einer Ofenröhrentrocknung einer Luftrocknung unterworfen wird und dass der erhaltene Luftgetrocknete, helle Fülltabak auf Trockengewichtsbasis einen gesamten Gehalt von reduzierendem Zucker im Bereich von 0 bis 6%, einen Chlorogensäuregehalt im Bereich von 0 bis 0,4%, einen Rutingehalt im Bereich von 0 bis 0,2% einen heisswasserlöslichen Gehalt im Bereich von 45 bis 55%, einen Gesamtaschengehalt im Bereich von 12 bis 26%, einen kombinierten Gehalt von Prolin und Threonin im Bereich von 0 bis 1 mg/g, einen kombinierten Asparaginsäure und Asparagingehalt im Bereich von 0,5 bis 1,7 mg/g und einen kombinierten Glutaminsäure- und Glutamingehalt im Bereich von 0,5 bis 1,6 mg/g besitzt.

2. Gemischter Tabak für Raucherartikel, dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass er bezogen auf das Gewicht der gesamten Mischung 0 bis 100% eines Füllabakes gemäss Anspruch 10 bis 50% eines Burley-Fülltabakes, 0 bis 30% eines Orient-Fülltabakes, 0 bis 60% eines rekonstituierten Tabakes, 0 bis 10% aufbereitete Tabakrippen und 0 bis 95% eines heissluftgetrockneten Fülltabakes enthält.

3. Gemischter Tabak für Raucherartikel, dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass er bezogen auf das Gewicht der gesamten Mischung 5 bis 100% eines Fülltabakes gemäss Anspruch 1, 0 bis 30% eines Orient-Fülltabakes, 0 bis 60% eines rekonstituierten Tabakes, 0 bis 10% aufbereitete Tabakrippen und 0 bis 95% heissluftgetrockneter heller Fülltabak enthält.

4. Gemischter Tabak gemäss Anspruch 2 oder 3, dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass der rekonstituierte Tabak denitritierter, rekonstituierter Tabak ist.

5. Gemischter Tabak gemäss Anspruch 4, dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass der rekonstituierte Tabak in einem Anteil von etwa 20%, bezogen auf das Gewicht der gesamten Mischung enthalten ist und dass der Fülltabak gemäss Anspruch 1 in einem Anteil von 20 bis 30%, vorzugsweise etwa 25%, bezogen auf das Gewicht der gesamten Mischung enthalten ist.

6. Gemischter tabak gemäss Anspruch 4, worin der Fülltabak gemäss Anspruch 1 in einem Anteil von etwa 50% der gesamten Mischung enthalten ist.

7. Gemischter Tabak für Raucherartikel, dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass er bezogen auf das Gewicht der gesamten Mischung 60 bis 100% des Fülltabakes gemäss Anspruch 1 von bis 30% Orient-Fülltabak und von 0 bis 10% aufbereitete Tabakrippen enthält.

8. Gemischter Tabak für Raucherartikel, dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass et bezogen auf das Gewicht der gesamten Mischung 40 bis 95% Fülltabak gemäss Anspruch 1 und 5 bis 60% denitritierter, rekonstituierter Tabak enthält.

9. Raucherartikel, welcher eine im wesentlichen zylindrische Füllung von Tabak doer Fülltabak gemäss einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche aufweist und in ein brennbares Papier gewickelt ist.

Revendications

1. Tabac de remplissage pour articles à fumer comprenant du tabac clair cultivé de manière traditionnelle, caractérisé en ce que le tabac clair est séché à l'air au lieu d'être séché au four et en ce que le tabac clair de remplissage séché à l'air qui en résulte a, sur une base de poids de tabac sec, un contenu de sucre réducteur total de l'ordre de 0 à 6%, un contenu d'acide chlorogénique de l'ordre de 0 à 0,4%, un contenu de rutine de l'ordre de 0 à 0,2%, un contenu soluble dans l'eau chaude de l'ordre de 45 à 55%, un contenu de cendre total de l'ordre de 12 à 26%, un contenu de proline et de thréonine combiné de l'ordre de 0 à 1 mg/g, un contenu d'acide aspartique et d'aspargine combiné de l'ordre de 0,5 à 1,7 mg/g et un contenu d'acide glutamique et de gluatmine combiné de l'ordre de 0,5 à 1,6 mg/g.

2. Tabac mélangé pour articles à fumer, caractérisé en ce qu'il comprend, en poids du mélange total, 5 à 100% d'un tabac de remplissage selon la revendication 1, de 0 à un maximum de 50% de tabac de remplissage burley, de 0 à 30% de tabac de remplissage oriental, de 0 à 60% de tabac reconstitué, de 0 à 10% de tiges de tabac préparées et de 0 à 95% de tabac de remplissage clair séché au four.

3. Tabac mélangé pour articles à fumer, caractérisé en ce qu'il comprend, en poids du mélange total, de 5 à 100% d'un tabac de remplissage selon la revendication 1, de 0 à 30% de tabac de remplissage oriental,

de 0 à 60% de tabac reconstitué, de 0 à 10% de tiges de tabac préparées, et de 0 à 95% de tabac de remplissage clair séché au four.

4. Tabac mélangé selon la revendication 2 ou la revendication 3, caractérisé en ce que le tabac reconstitué est du tabac reconstitué dénitrifié.

5. Tabac mélangé selon la revendication 4, caractérisé en ce que le tabac reconstitué représente environ 20% en poids et le tabac de remplissage selon la revendication 1 20 à 30% en poids, préférablement 25% en poids, du mélange total.

6. Tabac mélangé selon la revendication 4, dans lequel le tabac de remplissage selon la revendication 1 constitue environ 50% en poids du mélange total.

7. Tabac mélangé pour articles à fumer, caractérisé en ce qu'il comprend, en poids du mélange total, de 60 à 100% de tabac de remplissage selon la revendication 1, de 0 à 30% de tabac de remplissage oriental et de 0 à 10% de tiges de tabac préparées.

8. Tabac de remplissage pour articles à fumer, caractérisé en ce qu'il comprend, en poids du mélange total, de 40 à 95% d'un tabac de remplissage selon la revendication 1 et de 5 à 60% de tabac reconstitué dénitrifié.

9. Article à fumer, comprenant une charge substantiellement cylindrique de tabac ou de tabac de remplisage selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, emballée dans un emballage combustible.